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Resentment, Unrest and Riot

FROM MEAGER and inadequate reports the fact appears to be that a joint pastoral letter of the Catholic bishops of Germany has been suppressed in the American Zone by the American authorities. It was "withdrawn at the request of military government officials." The letter was read in the British Zone. It was not intended to be read in the Russian Zone. There was no news within four days telling whether or not the French permitted its reading.

On the basis of these reports—typically—it is next to impossible to comment confidently upon the main questions. To begin with, was the pastoral really barred by the MG authorities, or was it withdrawn of their own genuinely free will by the bishops after free discussion with the occupiers?

The fractional AP dispatch indicated it was barred—suppressed. The English let it go, saying, "it is impossible to interfere with the liberty of the Church." Our American agents got it "withdrawn," saying, "it incited resentment, unrest and possibly riot."

Whatever may be in Germany, here we are very definitely resentful, unrestful and at least inwardly riotous because the American public are kept in ignorance about the simple, primary facts. We want to see the text of the pastoral. We want to see the analysis by MG of this text with indication of exactly what the MG criticism is. We want to know truthfully in what manner the pastoral was "withdrawn."

Does Military Government and their State Department advisors and all the other occupying officials, and their public relations officers and censor people, suppose that this is a petty affair and that they can simply let out a few garbled accounts and then sit at ease and wait until the home populace forgets? Silencing bishops is no day-to-day detail of governmental rule. Let them ask the ghost of Hitler, their predecessor in that sort of work.

There is every indication so far that if we knew what was going on, we wouldn't like any part of the whole proceedings, from the text itself to any detail of Military Government's reaction.

Up to now THE COMMONWEAL has not cried down American Occupation the way most of its contemporaries have done, because we have tried to appreciate the enormity of the job and the failure of directions from home, and the work, in spite of all, accomplished. Now we are an enemy of Military Government: of General McNarney and General Clay and the whole hierarchy, and still more we are enemies of the Washington people who put them so far on the wrong road of policy and execution. Not being confirmed in enmity, we look with an angry impatience first for an honest description of what has taken place, and then, no doubt, for a revision of policy which will at least recognize that colonels cannot run the Church and that the heyday of the god-monarch passed with the empire of Alexander the Great.

The Food Picture

DESPITE a certain amount of popular agitation and press notices about various officials' remarks, the United States continues to fall even farther behind in its wheat shipments to the world's famine areas. The Secretary of Agriculture's assurances must by this time be wearing rather thin, but Mr. Anderson continues to make them. His latest is that once the rush of spring work on American farms — an activity which everyone must recognize as essential—has passed, American wheat will literally pour in for overseas shipment. Yet in spite of Mr. Anderson's quieting statements of earlier months American wheat shipments lagged even further in April.

The story of our failure to prepare is a sorry one. On the basis of a first-hand personal survey over a year ago Judge Rosenman warned the authorities of the impending famine in Europe. UNRRA-Director Lehman toured the nation last summer trying to arouse the American people to the crisis which lay ahead. Private relief agencies and a few journals of opinion such as THE COM-

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MONWEAL have been unceasing in demands that the necessary steps be taken as reports of the danger streamed in from country after country. It was not until February 1946 that President Truman called even for voluntary action. This proved ineffectual; not until April 9 did the Government take steps, the six-point program including the 25 percent reduction of flour available for domestic use. And the Government is now offering for wheat until March 1947 thirty cents per bushel over the ceiling price.

Meanwhile conditions in the famine areas have deteriorated even further. That this is indirectly due to American negligence is indicated by the fact that Argentina, Australia and Canada have shipped their full commitments. The Red Cross reports starvation in industrialized Austria; Poland is in dangerous condition; India's crisis is a few weeks off, while China has several provinces where starvation is widespread. To mention some of the most desperate.

This is hardly a situation where the diverting of a few wheat ships from Britain to the Continent will save the day. It calls for drastic measures on every front: the restoration and widening of rationing; a housewives' educational campaign by the Department of Agriculture; government requisitioning where necessary; widespread voluntary food gathering and shipping activities. America still has time to make some effective amends.

Reuther Faces Trouble

WALTER REUTHER is in trouble again. And it appears that he is going to remain in trouble at least until the next convention of the United Auto Workers, CIO. By a three-to-one majority his opponents on the union's executive board have put through a statement of policy which by clever implication brands him as a pro-AFL, anti-CIO, blundering, impractical, visionary and loudmouth.

R. J. Thomas, the man whom Reuther shoved from president to first vice-president at the recent convention, is happy as a lark. George F. Addes, secretary-treasurer, is quietly confident that he is the real power in the union. And the Reutherites are down in the mouth. All hopes for a burial of hatchets, a harmonizing of discords seems wasted, all blasted. The country's largest union is more torn with strife and dissension than at any time since the Homer Martin fracas in 1938-39.

Somehow, though, we cannot bring ourselves to be as discouraged as most of those who applauded Reuther's victory in Atlantic City and now mourn for his defeat in Chicago. It seems to us not only that things could be far worse, but that much good may yet flow from the muddy springs of last week's action. If, for example, this setback proves to Reuther that he must really buckle down to the problem of personal relations and ease off on the problem of public relations, then it will be all to the good. If it convinces him that he must submit his Lochinvar tendencies to the discipline of humility and the discipline of charity, then real progress will have been made. For most observers seem agreed that the main obstacle that stands in the way of Walter Reuther's emergence as a first-rate labor leader is the combination of coldness and arrogance in his own manner.

It is important, for example, to remember that less than half of the board members who voted for the statement of policy are actually CP's or fellow-travelers. And yet such was their fear, or dislike, of Reuther that they stopped thinking long enough to line up behind a document that fairly dripped and reeked of the Party line. Of course, there is some consolation in this thought, namely, that if Addes or any other fellow-traveler had run against Thomas and won, then Reuther would probably be writing statements full of anti-CP propaganda, statements which would then receive a walloping big majority on the same executive board. In other words, a good deal of this opposition is simply a natural reaction to the appearance of a strong, positive leadership in a union where only fence-sitters and compromisers could formerly keep above water.

Reuther finally did write a statement of his own—about a week too late—one that proves that he is still thinking better, more soundly, more constructively, more imaginatively and at the same time more practically than his opponents. He has found a brave and unexpected ally in Eleanor Roosevelt. His most bitter enemy, R. J. Thomas, went far toward discrediting himself with his hysterical outbursts. And when all the tumult and the shouting had died the new president had put his brother Victor in the educational department and Matt Winn, his devoted and able publicity agent, in the press department, thereby controlling the two most powerful mediums of propaganda in the union. He had also kept his temper. The situation was, in three words, far from hopeless.

The New French Constitution

BY THE TIME these lines are read, the new French Constitution will have been submitted to the electorate and its fate decided. Opposition to it is only partial; certain of its provisions are opposed by the MRP, and certain of its provisions are regarded with a slightly dubious eye by the Socialists, in both cases the fear being that the unicameral legislature represents too great a concentration of power, without any substantial checks or balances. To all practical intents, con-

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troversy over this proposed organic law centers on this issue. Yet, at a distance of 3,000 miles, there are other things to be said.

From an American or English point of view the preamble of this document—labeled "The Rights of Man"—continues to betray that unsolved dilemma which has always been the curse of continental democratic theory, how to reconcile personal and civic freedoms with majority rule. What may be called the Anglo-Saxon resolution of this dilemma is, granted, a strange and wonderful thing from the point of view of Cartesian logic. Our solution is based on long continuity of tradition and an unconscious acceptance by most of us of the idea of the natural (or "moral") law, as something binding upon and superior to the popular will. In the United States this operates through the power of the Supreme Court to declare an act of the legislature unconstitutional and through the presidential veto; in Britain it operates through the courts and through a series of accepted parliamentary conventions and procedural devices.

But what do we find in this new French constitution? We find first of all a flat statement: "Law is an expression of the national will. . . . This will is expressed through elected representatives of the people." Suppose, then, that a large majority of those representatives feel strongly—and presumably an equivalent majority of the people feel strongly—that the civil rights so handsomely provided in this new constitution are flim-flam and hence the national will is to abolish them. So long as the basic idea of law as being no more than an expression of the national will prevails, there can be no genuine assurance of personal freedom. One remembers Rousseau's solution of the difficulty: those who found themselves in deep disagreement with the majority, and unwilling to bow to the national will, were to be exiled, or "liquidated."

We read, therefore, with a certain wry humor, the twenty-second article of "The Rights of Man": "When the Government violates freedom and rights guaranteed by the Constitution, resistance in all its forms is the most sacred of rights and the most imperious of duties." Suppose, again, that the national will, as defined, decides that freedom and rights are bunk. Does this mean that a stubborn minority has the right—and duty—to armed rebellion against the national will? The words have no other meaning. Were such a minority uprising to be successful, the resultant régime would have, by definition, to impose itself on the country in authoritarian fashion; were the majority to retain power, it would have to suppress the opposition minority.

Once again we are inescapably driven back to the simple fact that without some body of law which a society (or a ruler) agrees is superior to its (or his) own will or whim, tyranny is inevitable. Now strangely enough the vast majority of people everywhere agree that such a body of law does exist, and, subject to human sinfulness and frailty, they so act. Where many balk is at admitting this publicly. For to do so comes very close to admitting God, and that is the hardest of all things to admit.

Facts to Be Faced

THE DEPENDENCE of any political system embodying acceptable guarantees of human freedoms upon the wide distribution of private ownership and upon decentralized economic power has been signalized more than once in these pages. Wide sharing of power and responsibility is an essential note of any enduring "open society." Hence the uneasy feeling that ownership is too heavily concentrated in the United States. In the matter of home ownership figures disclosed in a current leaflet published by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, Des Moines, Iowa, indicate reasons for worry. In not one of the twenty-five leading American cities listed in the study do the majority of families own their own homes. The larger the city the higher the proportion of tenancy, generally speaking.

In rural areas round and about these cities the proportion of home ownership is healthier; yet farm tenancy rather than private ownership is dominant in several Southern States, reflecting the national trend to commercialized farming on an ever vaster scale. If the majority of Americans do not own their own homes or their own plots of land, their effective ownership in industry is of an almost negligible quantity. Therefore, organizing according to profession in labor unions or as consumers in cooperatives provides the only means by which most Americans can wield economic power and build up a bulwark for their liberties.

Another finding in the Rural Life leaflet which is not unrelated to the foregoing is that in twenty-five leading American cities people are not producing enough children to keep the population stationary—not in a single city. The people in the rural districts near enough to experience the withering effects of the metropolitan life of such centers as Boston and New York are not reproducing themselves, either. And almost without exception the states with high birthrates are Southern states. Unhappily the proportion of Catholics in the cities under study has no observable effect either upon the birthrate or the incidence of home ownership. Although these figures should be of special interest to Catholics, everyone concerned with the future of the American family, the community, the nation should recognize these tendencies for what they are.

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Return to Principle

DOROTHY THOMPSON

ON MAY 8th we celebrated the first anniversary of V-E Day. Already it is clear that, as in the time between September, 1939, and May, 1940, the nations struggled, not without hope, in a war which was not yet a war, so we, in these past months, have been celebrating, not without profound doubts and fears, a peace which is not a peace.

As I write these lines, the outlook for peace, even for our times, is far less hopeful than it was in 1937, 1938 and the early part of 1939, while the prospect of another war is far more horrifying. Indeed, it is apocalyptic. And if this be so, there are reasons for it. We cannot find our way out of the gathering gloom, without exploring those reasons. Perhaps it is already too late, but only by retracing the steps we have taken can we possibly find the point where we went astray.

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I think we went astray when, avid for "total victory," emulating the fanatic who "redoubles his zeal as he loses sight of his aim," and impressed by the mighty strength and apparently hearty cooperation of the war-time coalition, we decided that Peace, like Victory, could be assured by force alone, and by the force of the world's three leading powers.

Now, peace does, indeed, rest upon power, but power can be pooled for peace only through the mutual acceptance of clear principles. In order that any three persons—to say nothing of three great nations—should do anything together, they must clearly agree in advance what they want to do, and they must also develop their plans within a framework of reference, to which each move of one or the other can be referred. If, for instance, they wish to prevent aggression, they must begin by defining what aggression is. If they want to secure the equal sovereignty of all nations —even if for the purpose of later merging elements of that sovereignty in a higher body—they must define it, and maintain its validity for all nations *without exception*. If they deprive even the vanquished of any possibility of their own defense, they must find a substitute. At every point they must lay the foundation in principle for the creation and rule of law. Otherwise, just as war is the continuation of peace in another field, so peace will merely become the continuation of war, and not necessarily with the original alignments.

This is, I think, axiomatic. But from Casablanca with its "Unconditional Surrender" formula—a meaningless phrase merely postponing the answer to the question—to UN, based not on universally valid principles, which could become the basis of a world law, but on a presumption of the utmost fragility—the continued cooperation of great states each pursuing its own interests above and apart from the rules applying to others—we have been moving inevitably toward the terrible situation in which we find ourselves today.

At the outbreak of hostilities the allied world denounced, as aggression, the Hitlerian device of organizing minorities within a neighboring state to capture the government of that state, and gave that form of aggression a name: Quislingism. Yet the Allies consented to and collaborated with the successful application of the same device to Poland, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Jugoslavia, and putting face-saving qualifications on it does not change its essential nature. There is no difference between the Iran affair of 1946 and the Polish crisis from 1939 to the establishment of the Beirut government. If we gave in on Poland, why should we not give in on Iran? Our own interests are more nearly affected, but the principle is no different.

The acceptance of this nazi device must, of course, be justified somehow, so the Russians bring forth new definitions of fascism, which make Roosevelt, Bevin, Churchill, and everyone not a communist or communist sympathizer into a "fascist Beast." General Anders is such a "fascist Beast"—though he was fighting the nazis while Stalin was offering them an outright military alliance, in return for a division of spoils. Every rebel against Soviet domination is a "fascist." The communist press in Berlin calls the social democrat, Dr. Schumacher, a "saboteur and reactionary fascist, a last strategic reserve of monopolistic capitalism" because he resisted a merger between the German democratic socialists and communists, whereby the communists would become the heirs of the vastly greater democratic-socialist strength among German workers.

Thus having failed to make original definitions, all words lose their meanings, and a world-wide campaign is launched utterly to confuse and divide the people in a meaningless babble.

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There is no hope for us except to return to first principles as a foundation for international law and gather around ourselves all who are willing to share in creating and maintaining law.

It is impossible to create an international order by mere "organization." Cohesion around common aims and principles must first exist. It is precisely because there is no such cohesion that UN is incapable of securing justice, maintaining peace, or even creating law, to say nothing of enforcing it.

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How Can I Face Them?

Joseph Calderon

HOW can I face Giuseppe now, Leonardo, Barbi, Luigi, my other Italian friends who volunteered to cross over into enemy occupied territory? The pay was little; torture and death the price of capture.

Sotto, the Neopolitan, was captured. We found his body, marked with cigarette burns, when we took Rome. Gallo was betrayed by a trusted member of the network; he suffered unspeakable horrors in the Gestapo chambers on Via Tasso. With his finger nails he etched the symbol of his betrayer on the cement walls of the dark cell. A rabbit; we nabbed Coniglio, the traitor.

There is no percentage in this business. Too dangerous: enemies within; enemies without.

Giuseppe said, "Si."

"Laurenti," I had said, "Laurenti, I need a really bright chap for an important mission—uno veramente in gamba." Laurenti headed the military section of the Committee of Liberation of Tuscany. A leading Florentine Christian Democrat; dark mustached lawyer with offices on Piazza Duomo. He distributed arms and supplies during the German occupation. The SS never got him. An American bombing raid demolished his villa; killed his wife and child.

"How about my counter-espionage chief? A bit wild. Did an excellent job during the occupation."

"Good enough," I had replied. "Tomorrow, then."

Giuseppe was slight; sharp nose with a mole on the tip; thick glasses; made quick birdlike movements as he spoke; about four feet nine; blond hair; striped shirt; no tie; blue trousers; heavy shoes, worn at the heels. Triestino. Parents in Trieste. He had come to Florence to study at the University. I decide to get down to business.

"Volete varcare la linea?" I watch his face.

"Dove?" he smiles.

"Te lo dirò quando tu sarai pronto."

He had to think it over. He should be studying for his examinations. Couldn't the mission wait? He owed it to himself, his parents.

"And nothing is due Italy? La patria? L'Italia dolorosa? Your Italy, joined now with us in common cause?"

Laurenti's law books needed dusting; the parchment bindings had a rusty, aged look. We stood there in the quiet office.

"He will go," announced Laurenti breaking the silence.

Giuseppe said, "Si."

Two weeks pass by. I take Giuseppe and Leonardo, serious and grave lieutenant in the carabinieri, to a villa near Bagni di Lucca. Partisans with tommy guns entering and leaving; some are lying on their backs soaking sun. We identify ourselves and wait in Captain Brown's office.

"I won't," says the Captain, short and plump; youthful face. He storms into the office. "I refuse to have any more of my partisans killed on routine scouting missions. Why in hell doesn't division send out its own men?"

"Sergeant Nicola," he shouts, "Sergeant Nicola. Get Lightning Flash. Tell them no more men."

"Florence wants last month's financial statement," says Nicola as he hurries into the office. "Freedom is calling for yesterday's report on the Shenly operation. And here's Calderon with two jokers. Major Gangi called up and says it's OK."

I stand up. "Hello, Captain. When do we eat? We're starved."

"Chow'll be ready in a few minutes. Your boys'll be fed in the next room. Send them upstairs if they want to wash up."

The steak is leathery, the wine indifferent and the GI bread stale. I wish I were back at our billet in Florence. Maria makes the most wonderful green macaroni and her heavenly risotto! White-haired Maria. An artist. Person of great dignity; anti-clerical; full of kindness. Devoted to her son, a PW in a US army cage somewhere.

"I'll get your bennies through tonight. A barrage will be laid to keep jerry under cover."

Nicola rushes in. "Captain, I just got the news that we lost Francesco. Guido says they were ambushed last night."

"Damn it all. Another one. My aching back. I've had the worst run of luck for the last two weeks. Send a courier to Villa Malfi. Tell Guido to write a full report; we've got to pouch it to Caserta. Notify finance."

We continue eating. I think of Francesco lying alone in the sun; with no one to mourn his death. And his soul cried unto the Lord: all my friends have forsaken me; mine enemies have prevailed against me. I have perished in my country's service; am I to be numbered with the transgressors?

"Did I show you the snapshot I got last week of my little boy? Look. Eighteen months . . ."

"Yes," I reply but no longer do I hear Captain Brown's chatter. Loud is the lamentation of Francesco's soul struggling to flee the untombed body.

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After lunch I rejoin Giuseppe and Leonardo in the garden behind the villa. "How do you feel, boys?" I ask. "Have you eaten enough? Do you feel nervous or sick?"

"Bene," they reply. We talk about the mission they are to perform, whom they are to contact, what they are to do in case of capture; what I will do with their personal effects, notification of relatives. I ask them to search their clothing for the last time to make certain that no incriminating documents, no American cigarettes, no GI rations, no white bread, no authentic identity card are on their person. I go through their pockets myself. SOP ever since I lost Armando.

Now comes the hard, the delicate question. I am always embarrassed to ask it. But I must; otherwise I can't sleep, would have no peace. No matter how many I dispatch across the lines I never can be completely detached—hardboiled.

"Giuseppe, did you go to confession? What about you, Leonardo? And receive the Sacrament?"

They had.

Two days later I receive a message written in clear neat handwriting on tissue paper. They had gotten through. Leonardo stepped on a freak mine. His heel was blown off. Giuseppe carried him to a farmhouse, gave the farmer several thousand lire; and continued on his mission.

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No sooner have I filed the message in the Parma operations folder than Sergeant Sabotte walks in.

"Say, Joe, there's a guy outside. Wants to see 'il commendatore.' Says D'Arrigo sent him. Comes from Rome. An Italian colonel."

"Send him in."

He enters. A thin, white-haired man in his sixties. Rather tense-looking, colorless lips. Loose fitting gray uniform.

"Buon giorno. What can I do for you, Colnel? Have a cigarette. Here, sit on this comfortable chair."

"D'Arrigo, Captain D'Arrigo told me you were looking for someone to go to Venice. I'm tired, tanto stanco, of sitting in the Ministry of War. I want to do something for my country and yours."

I look him over and shake my head. "Colonel, we need a very young officer. We gave specific instructions to D'Arrigo. I'm terribly sorry to have you put to so much trouble and inconvenience. But we can't use you. You can stay at the Albergo Marango till I arrange for your passage to Rome."

"But," replies the Colonel, "I want to go north. I insist. Venice is my city. I was born there, lived there for many years. I know it like the palm of my hand. Have many friends there. Besides, the Germans would not carry me off for slave labor, I'm too old. I can set up a network. I insist."

"Have you ever parachuted?"

"No, but I'll cross the lines. I can do it. Give me a chance."

"That's too dangerous now. The lines are alive; too much activity."

"I'm willing to take the risk. I want no pay. Nothing."

"Sabotte," I cry, "send a message to Rome and London. Ask for traces on Colonello Augusto Barbi. Send biographical details for a security check. Have six passport-size snaps of the colonel ready for the fake identity cards. Tell Metz at the holding area to put him on ice."

Three weeks later we slipped the colonel through the line just above Livorno. Our W/T reported his safe arrival in Venice. He had contacted our man on the Committee of Liberation, who in turn notified Matela, our W/T operator.

My orders now were to get a man into Milano. The mission called for an engineer. Captain Patrucci had suggested a chap who had done an extraordinary job for the partito d'Azione. He had penetrated Von Thunn's outfit; was recruited as a W/T instructor in Florence. Got the notebook containing photos, names, addresses, biographical details of the Florence Nazi stay-behind network. Von Thunn, who liked women and wine, never knew when to stop. Was more interested in parties than in war. At one of these parties during which Von Thunn shot up the mirrors in the villa and dived or fell into the pool in the garden, Soderini quietly slipped into his office, stole the notebook, went into his room, copied the notations, studied the photos, returned the notebook.

That evening at dinner I spoke to Patrucci. "Pete, I need Soderini. For the Mica operation. I wonder if we can have him."

"I think so," he replies, "I'll speak to Anna. She'll get him for us."

Within a month Soderini parachuted into a field near Milano. Our reception committee had been alerted and were on the spot to greet him, bring him up to date on the latest regulations, write out for him the proper permesso di circolazione.

Bolzano was next. One mission after another. I had to mount a mission for Bolzano. I needed a W/T operator who could also be chief. I rode over to Villa Ariosto.

"Major, can you let me have a W/T operator? The two guys I got from the Italian Navy didn't pan out. And D'Arrigo tells me the material available now isn't high grade."

"You can have Luigi, if he wants to go. I doubt it. He just got back from Trieste after six months. Had a hell of a time."

Luigi was on the terrace, teaching recruits how to operate a sten gun. A dark Sicilian, a lieutenant in the Italian Air Force. Spoke the soft dialect of

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Palermo. I met his family there when we were attached to Patton's headquarters in the Palazzo Reale. Seventh Army then.

"Luigi," when we were alone, " I know you have just come out. But I need you badly."

"What did the major say?" he inquires.

"OK."

"Durante la guerra questo e il mio mestiere. OK. And grazie tante for what you did for my family in Palermo. Massimo wrote."

"What I did was nothing," I replied. "It was the least I could do for the family of one who had entered the service of il Commando Americano."

Six weeks later Luigi came in on his W/T near Bolzano. Within two months he was sending high grade messages. London complimented Luigi's reports, which we relayed daily. We had hit the jackpot.

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Then in the Spring came the offensive, the crash through. The Germans fled before us; we were hot on their heels. Up through Bologna, Parma, across the Po into Milan. It was a triumphal tour; most of the dirty work had been done by the partisans whom we had armed and fed, to whom we had sent leaders during the long and bitter winter. There they were with our tommy guns slung, shouting viva viva.

There wasn't much to do in Milan either. The partisans had killed off most of the people in whom we had an interest. There were a few left. We arrested some of them. We got the Baroness Annabella Ottoberg who used to sleep with a homosexual Indian prince until she found him in bed with one of her agents, and then she threw him out naked into the streets of Naples. We got Jaeger, among the best of the German cipher men; he broke a British embassy code. When captured, he was leading a communist partisan band in a village near the Swiss border. There was fat Grasson, the French traitor, in a Todt uniform. He had an attraction for the Franciscan order. Always said his beads. And Swiss-born Schecter who joined the British Army in 1938 on orders of his Axis superiors for the purpose of getting military information for the enemy. And Besseler who had lived in Yorkville and spoke New Yorkese, and saber-scarred Kaller—and so many others. We were tired of them all. Picking them up, locking them up, interrogating them, writing reports; and finally sending them south to Army Group PW cage for detailed and thorough going over by British Intelligence.

We read about V-E day in *Stars and Stripes*. Though I had known that negotiations had been going on for months in Switzerland, though we knew—from a Benedictine monk whom they had selected as go-between—that the SS in Verona were ready to throw in the sponge and give us the key to the whole of northern Italy, despite many other indications and clues of the impending end, V-E day was a complete and unbelievable surprise.

We looked forward to going home. Everybody got pencil and paper to figure out his points: children, combat stars, months in service, months overseas. Most of us were way over 85, so we decided to hold a big celebration before we broke up and left for stateside. The land of milk and honey.

To this party we invited Italian, British and American friends. Maria cooked lasagne al forno, special dolci, prepared huge cassate covered with chocolate. Homemade ice cream. By swapping cigarettes I got six bottles of Haig & Haig from our British opposites, and old wine from our Milanese neighbors. The dining room was festooned with strips of colored paper. Antonia was busy all day; and happy. Soon, she says, soon my man will come home. Her husband was taken prisoner on the Russian front.

Agrifoglio is asked by Patrucci to make a toast.

"We have traveled a long way together," he begins. "It was not always that way. Once we were enemies. They made us your enemies; they made many of us your enemies. But from Sicily we have fought side by side. We Italians have neither faltered nor failed you. May America and the Allies recall our dead in the Allied cause. Viva L'Italia! Viva L'America! Viva gli Alleati!"

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Those of us who were GIs in Italy meet from time to time; swap stories, recall pleasant experiences, compare notes. It is interesting to observe that we seem to agree that there exists a curious, undefined antipathy toward the Italians among Americans. The Italians do not enjoy a good press in this country—during the war there was the closed curtain of American and British censorship for political reasons—and still today—also for political reasons—Americans have not been told the realities of Italy's vital contribution to V-E day. Even now few Americans know how the Italians augmented the British naval forces by five battleships, nine cruisers, twenty-five torpedo craft, nineteen frigates, thirty-five submarines, and a great number of smaller craft.

An attempt to treat fully the Italian contribution to our military effort is outside the purpose of these recollections, but certain aspects can be briefly mentioned. The Italians had five divisions on the British Eighth Army front. Italy's offer to place more troops at the front was turned down. Still, more Italian service troops were allowed. Thousands of these troops manned and guarded bridges, gasoline, supply, salvage and other installations throughout the length of the peninsula; thereby releasing Americans and British for other duties.

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Security regulations precluded reporting at the time the rescue operations involving Allied personnel in enemy occupied territory carried out by Italian volunteers. A conservative estimate places the number of American and English soldiers rescued by Italians at over one hundred and sixty-five thousand. Italians would leave the safety of liberated Italy to enter German-held territory. There they would seek, round up and lead Americans and other Allied escaped prisoners of war to points where they would be picked up by fast moving craft, submarines, planes; or they would escort them through the lines whenever possible. Heaven alone knows how many of these volunteers fell into the hands of the fascist brigades, Gestapo and German military security police.

Who now recalls the pivotal rôle played by the Italian partisans in the defeat of the Nazi war machine? Field Marshal Alexander, Commander of Allied Force Headquarters of the Mediterranean theater of operations, declared that the Italian resistance fought the Germans more effectively than did any other resistance movement in Europe. In this he was merely echoing General Mark Clark. Churchill declared in the House of Commons, "I will, however, emphasize some main points which stand out. The first is that the Italian forces and population have everywhere shown themselves unfriendly or actively hostile to the Germans. The second is that every effort has been made both by the government and its forces to comply with the Armistice conditions. Fighting is taking place at many points between the Italians and German intruders, and there is no doubt whatever on which side the sympathy, hopes and efforts of the Italian nation now lie. . . . "

The point I have tried to make is that after the break from the Nazi-Fascist clutch, Italy fought on our side with everything she had; she held nothing back. The suggestion I make now is that England, Russia, France, Yugoslavia, and to some extent the United States are treating Italy badly. Political expediency is with us more than ever; it is no longer considered essential to be just or to act honorably.

Russia wants Tripoli which is a modern Italian city, and as culturally and economically integral to continental Italy as Algiers is to metropolitan France. There are over 200,000 Italians living in the Italian colonies. France is chasing Italians out of Tunisia.

Italy has forty-five million inhabitants—and cannot support them. Where are they supposed to go? There has been no evidence of maladministration of Italian colonies by pre-fascist Italy; and there is evidence that only under British rule have anti-Semitic manifestions occurred in Tripoli. The Italian government has declared that it is prepared to train the native population for local self-government as we did the Philippines, that it will transfer its colonies to the United Nations, provided this action is coordinated with other colonial powers and in line with a general policy laid down by the UN and binding on all members.

Then there are the cities of Fiume, Zara and Trieste. Two of them are already under the totalitarian yoke of Tito, and he is threatening Trieste, the third. Why all these delays in making a peace with Italy, these committees of inquiry of the foreign ministers to investigate whether Trieste is Italian?

Here it is 12 months after V-E day and 34 months after the Armistice with Italy; and there is yet to be drawn a peace treaty with a co-belligerent who has worked her passage. In 1919, an enemy who fought to the bitter end immediately was offered a peace treaty at Versailles by the then Allies.

How can I face them now, Giuseppe, and Leonardo, Barbi—brave Italians?

Education for the Good Life

III

Jacques Maritain

SO MUCH for *natural morality*. Another point deals with morality *as backed up by faith* and involving supernatural life. I discussed previously the unbreakable relationship which, in actual existence, links morality with religion. Truth to tell, merely natural or rational ethics, if it is taken as a complete system of morality, is abstract ethics, dealing with a possible man, not with man in his concrete and real existential status. Ethics is able really to constitute a full practical science only on the condition that it be a body of knowledge barked up religiously. Moral teaching, therefore, if it is to be a genuine enlightenment of practical reason, must not leave religion out of account, it must be given with a religious inspiration.

This does not mean that moral rules should be presented only as dictated by religion. On the

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contrary, the reasons which make them necessary for human life should be ceaselessly stressed, as well as their natural foundations and suitabilities. Morality is steeped in intelligence, the goal is to awaken moral intelligence in the pupil. I think that the discussion of concrete instances, taken from ordinary life, and of particular *points of conscience* is better calculated to sharpen ethical awareness as well as to interest the child than mere emphasis on general principles. Discussions of this kind, relying upon the natural moral instinct of youth, and asking for the child's active participation, seem to me especially adapted for the first years of training in moral knowledge. Later on, deeper and more general considerations would be embarked upon. As behooves the great importance of the matter, such moral teaching, both rationally developed and religiously inspired, should form the subject of special courses in the curriculum of schools and colleges.

It has moreover to remain distinct—I mean after the years of early formation — from religious training itself, which implies many other subject-matters than morality and must be more concerned with God than with man. Shall I run counter to the convention of contemporary education if I say that this religious training should not only be given in the family and in the church-community, independently of the life of the school, but should also be connected with this very life as an integral part of it? In any case, that is my conviction.

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If we are firmly and positively assured that religion is nothing but error and superstition, this conviction will of course appear to us as nonsense. In the opposite case, I do not see how we can pretend that God has less right to have His place in the school than Euclid or John Locke. All serious-minded observers agree that the split between religion and life is the root spiritual disorder from which we suffer today. It is preposterous to make this split begin from childhood on and to maintain it in our educational system by cutting off religious training from the training proper to schools and colleges. Youth is aware that school and college education is charged with furnishing their minds with each and every knowledge required by the realities of life. If religious knowledge is disconnected from this education, it is normal to suppose it to be something separate and additional, either superfluous or merely related to private sentimentality. It is the very right of the child and the youth to be equipped through his formal education with religious knowledge as well as with any knowledge which plays an essential part in the life of man.

Such are the principles which dominate the question. They are, to my mind, grounded in the nature of things. If they are still disregarded by many, this is, in my opinion, mainly as a result of the difficulties involved in their application, and because of the interference of other principles, such as the lay or merely temporal character of the state.

Yet I am convinced that these difficulties may be overcome, without the latter principle being denied or imperiled. With the denominational schools, colleges or universities, the problem of religious training and of moral teaching given in connection with religion is obviously solved from the very start. Even the whole structure of education should be inspired by the very philosophy of life and the fundamental outlook proper to the denomination of the school—which is a prominent advantage from the religious and spiritual point of view. The problem is rather to avoid youth's being ignorant or even distrustful of those who are educated in other lines and who will be their fellow-citizens, and to insure, among all, that mutual understanding which is required by civic friendship and cooperation in the temporal common good. This problem can easily be solved by establishing regular contacts between students of the diverse schools and colleges: either in youth-camps or youth-organizations, or during some periods of common work (for instance, educational visits or travels, common exercises in physical training, etc.) or, especially as concerns universities, by conferences or congresses of students.

Now, if it is a question of non-denominational schools, colleges and universities, either privately endowed or founded by the state, this time the problem of mutual acquaintance and understanding is solved from the start. It is the problem of religious and religiously-inspired moral teaching which makes difficulties. The general solution consists in having religious training and moral teaching given by diverse teachers, who belong to the different creeds in which the students share.

As concerns religious training, it has naturally to be given by the priests, ministers or rabbis. I have said that this training should be closely connected with the life of the school: this would be carried into effect if each non-denominational school or college had its own chaplains and its own chapels in which religious training and exercises would take place.

As concerns moral teaching, it would be given in the classrooms of the school or the college, and by lay teachers, sharing in the diverse creeds in question.

Be it noted, on the other hand, that in our ideal college curriculum the courses in moral philosophy, assigned to the last college year, are by virtue of their very object something different from the moral teaching we are now considering. They essentially depend on reason, even if reason

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is not, especialy there, ignorant of faith. They escape therefore any denominational pluralism, and they should be given by professors of philosophy, without any other requirement than true competence and capacity in ethical philosophy.

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What I have discussed in all my previous remarks is what moral teaching should *normally* be. Now, before concluding, I must add that, as regards moral education, we are not in normal conditions. The modern world has met with a complete failure in moral education. As a result, the task of moral re-education is a matter of public emergency. Every serious observer recognizes the fact that children have not only to be trained in behavior, in manner, proper conduct, law observance and politeness, but that this very training remains deficient and precarious if genuine inner formation is not given. In order for teachers in public schools not to face unruliness and violence, the theory that children must begin by letting loose and exhausting the instincts of the primitive man does rather a feeble good turn: frank recognition of the authority of teachers, and strong moral principles, that is, taught in utter trust in their truth, surely do more for school discipline than the eventual intervention of police force. I therefore think that, owing to circumstances, additional emphasis should be brought to the teaching of natural morality. The normal way of giving this teaching, which is, as I have pointed out, to have it embodied in humanities, literature and history, does not suffice in the face of the tremendous degradation of ethical reason which is today observable. For the moment the evil is still more in intelligence than in behavior, I mean in still civilized countries. Exhausted and bewildered by dint of false and dehumanized philosophy, reason confesses thorough impotence with regard to the justification of any ethical standards. The question is to recover natural and rational adherence of the mind to the most elementary values of human life, to justice, to pity, to freedom. To such a disease of human intelligence and conscience special remedies should be given, not only through the badly needed revival of religious faith, but also through a revival of the moral power of reason. Accordingly, if teachers may be found whose reason is less sick than that of their students, special teaching should be provided, in school and colleges, for the principles of natural morality, notably in the field of political, civic and social morality.

All this is true. But the fact remains that all this is insufficient — just as formal education, school and college education is insufficient for the complete education of the human being—just as reason is insufficient for the practical guidance of human life, if reason is not quickened by faith and love. For in the first and decisive moral act in which, if it is rigidly done, reason chooses to do good for the sake of good, and thus directs itself, at least implicitly, to the divine ultimate End—reason, human reason in our wounded nature can make such a choice only because it is, if only unaware and secretly, enlightened and strengthened in its depths by faith and divine grace.

We are entering an apocalyptic age. Unavoidably, we shall live in a new world in which, for better or for worse, tremendous new energies will be at work. The iron discipline of social organization, as required by the technological revolution and the intercommunication of all the peoples of the earth, will probably succeed the age of rugged, or rather, loose, individualism. If human civilization yields under the burden of matter and gives itself over to technocracy, state despotism and scientific cultivation of a soulless rational ape, it's all over with morality, as well as with art and contemplation and freedom. If the leaven and inspiration of the Gospel raises and quickens the whole mass, everything will be saved. The new age will be worthy of man and commensurate with man on condition that it be an age of Christian reason, of Christian philosophy. Human morals and ethics will revive on condition that human life be transpenetrated by the call of the hero, by the call of the saint, and, as Bergson put it, that mechanics and civilization, the working of practical reason and the human will, be given the *supplément d'âme* (the additional amount of soul) which they need, by mystics and the paschal fire of contemplative wisdom and love.

London Commentary

J. L. BENVENISTI

IN AN ARTICLE published some weeks ago in these pages, I tried to show something of the inwardness of the recent British revolution, and what it was that caused the British to put a Labor Government into power. There is, however, another question to be examined in this connection, namely, whether the present Labor Government is really the kind of medicine our inner doctor was ordering, whether it does truly satisfy that special kind of urge which caused the people of Britain to put it into power.

At the moment, if there is one thing more certain than another about Britain, it is that the Labor Government is in the saddle with a firmness that suggests undislodgeability. The mood of the country is unmistakable, as the London County Council elections have shown. To Labor, that already had much on that assembly, the electorate gave more, and the Tories lost a good part of the little that they had.

All this is the more noteworthy since Labor has

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failed to do the impossible quite as completely as the Tories or anybody else would have failed. We are rationed up to the eyebrows (quite rightly, since the alternative would be chaos), we have no clothes—at least, none that anybody would notice—and we most certainly have no houses. The Tories made great play with the last matter during the London County Council elections to which I have just referred. They chose as their principal piece of artillery the fact that the Government had failed to produce any houses out of nothing, and so far as one could judge by the results, the whole campaign was a waste of energy and paper. The ordinary people of the country are perfectly well aware that it takes time to iron out such difficulties as these, and are fair-minded enough to give a reasonable chance to the Government they have elected.

The fact is that the political lot of the Tory is today not a happy one, and I thank my stars that I do not have to earn my bread as a Tory organizer, for I have not the faintest notion what line I should take in that capacity. The "free enterprise" line is compromised beyond redemption. It is too much associated in people's memories with the mass unemployment of the inter-war period, so there really only remains the bogey of bureaucracy and totalitarian tyranny which the Tories—not that I blame them—are, of course, working for all they are worth. But few people take even that very seriously, nor is there any reason why they should, for all talk of bureaucratic tyranny and bureaucratic dragooning in Britain is rubbish. No essential liberty is being interfered with; no one, if we except the Income Tax Collector, is dragooning anybody.

It is unfortunate for the Tories that the real defect of the Labor Party is one to which they cannot very well draw attention. For so far from being a totalitarian tyranny, it tends rather to suffer from an excessive limitation of its objectives, and it is precisely here that the first hiatus between Government and people is beginning to be faintly perceptible. It does not show itself in an actual decline of popular support. That, as I have shown, is as strong as ever, for there is no one else to whom people can turn, but the shrewd observer can nevertheless not help being dimly aware that this hiatus is beginning to exist.

I have spoken of the excessive limitation of the Labor Government's objectives, and here, I think, is the essence of the matter. The Labor Government is concerned with guaranteeing certain fundamental rights, such as the right to a job at decent wages (and very important rights they are), and doesn't seem to be very much concerned at what happens after that. It does not seem to be very much concerned about the end for which this totality of rights is to be used. In this respect it is itself as negative and self-effacing as any business government. It conjures up no kind of picture to the mind, and may for that reason one day fail to give the leadership which the country will demand.

Mr. J. B. Priestley summed the matter up admirably in a recent broadcast. "Nothing," he said, "could be more British than the Labor Party, that is, on its own political level, but it is significant that we cannot associate any style of life with it. . . . And certainly if the Labor Party wished to demonstrate the absurdity of the Tory charge that it is bent on destroying the people's liberty, it has only to point to this great blank in its program, the absence of any picture of the kind of Britain it wants to create."

Now, all this, I think, amounts to something very important. Man lives not by bread alone, nor even by social security and guaranteed employment. Fifty years ago he lived in this country, I think, by the vision of the grandeur and power of aristocratic England. With that gone, and in an age in which revealed religion has largely lost its hold on men's minds, I am not certain what he is now going to live by.

True there is deep in the heart of every Englishman (as there is, no doubt, in the heart of every American and, I strongly suspect, in the heart of everybody else) the dream of a little house and garden in which a man can potter about and play with his children, and I suppose that dimly most of the people I see walking down the street, or going about in 'buses, are thinking about that. But the dream is a little bit shadowy just at present, and if you asked the dreamer what those children with whom he wants to play are ultimately going to do with themselves, I think he would not be able to give you a very positive answer.

But I repeat that the dream itself seems a little shadowy, and it is to my mind very significant that the average man knows very little of what is being planned and what is being done in this very important matter of houses and gardens. It does not seem to strike anybody that this average man should know about and be a part of any great scheme for a truly worthy rehousing of the nation, and that is all the more remarkable because I believe that a great deal is being done in this respect. I have no reason to suppose that Mr. Aneurin Bevan, the Minister of Health (it is the Minister of Health who, by some queer British quirk, is responsible for the building of houses) has not got excellent plans, or that he will not in due course deliver the houses, but I don't think he gets excited about it, or expects anybody else to get excited about it. I think he plans just to hand them out as though they were fish, or fountain pens, or any other commodity needed for the satisfaction of our more pedestrian wants.

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It is very much the same story with the great plan for remodeling London which was devised by Professor Abercrombie and adopted by the London County Council. The thing had a little tiny spurt of publicity some months ago, and I saw a book about it in the shops at a monstrously prohibitive price, and there it all ended. And for all people know, or care, about the Greater London Plan it might just as well have been a plan for the rebuilding of Timbuctoo. Indeed, in the middle of writing this article I myself had to ring up the London County Council's Public Relations Officer to find out what exactly was happening about the matter, only to be told that shortages of labor and material made it impossible to proceed with the program at present—as though it mattered that we could not actually start the job for another four or five years! The point is that here was something really worthwhile, which was capable of firing men's minds, something for which it was worth waiting and if necessary denying ourselves, for this great project for the worthy rebuilding of our great capital city is nothing less than that. Yet the thing has been simply pigeonholed and nobody knows or cares twopence.

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Now, this is not merely a matter of bad publicity or good publicity, it is a matter that shows up the whole quality of the relationship between a government and its people and indicates the extent to which it is responsive to their needs and unspoken desires. And by this test the Labor Party does not come out very well, for the real fault of the British Labor Party is that they have failed to recognize that the appeal of socialism lies not in its ability to provide material goods or to distribute them, but in its spiritual content.

I said something last time about the great human instinct of self-dedication, saying that it was as strong as the strongest of our physical appetites. I implied that it was this urge that was the moving cause of our recent revolution, and it is precisely to this mood that I do not believe our Government is wholly attuned, for it has placed no clear, constructive aim before us, to which the individual is summoned to harness his loyalty and his energy. All the individual is asked to do is to fork out his Income Tax, which (Americans, please note) takes nearly half of the greater part of even quite modest incomes.

All this does not mean that the Labor Government's work provides no stimulus at all, or that there is not a great deal being done by it that is fine and really exciting. Most of us, for instance, are getting a genuine kick out of the nationalization of our coal industry, which will ultimately involve turning it from our worst industrial hellpit into a clean, scientific and reasonably safe means of livelihood.

But the coal mines for most of us are a very long way off, and this kind of thrill at second remove is not quite what we need. We want more than that, and the result of not getting it is that we are going about with a sort of subconscious malaise which is expressing itself in different ways.

The most serious of these is, I am afraid, a very marked fall in productivity There are various reasons for this. Workers are tired, rations are short, and the money incentive fails very largely in its effect because there is still so little that money can buy. But the biggest factor, to my mind, is the psychological one. There is no vision to stimulate us or to revive the Dunkirk spirit. The worker feels now that he is just "working for the boss." He does not want to work harder just to put money into the Boss's pocket, and there does not seem to be anybody around to tell him in a sufficiently clear and persuasive way that there is a great deal more to it than that.

I also link up this malaise with our surprisingly tolerant and uneasily inquisitive attitude towards Russia. I should like to say a word or two about that, because I have endeavored to carry out a kind of private Gallup poll on this subject among a class to whom I give a weekly lecture on current affairs. I discovered that out of a class of thirty people with every kind of social background and representing every shade of political opinion, only one was prepared to assert that Russia was an aggressor state of the same quality and with the same imperialist aims as Nazi Germany, the rest held what may now be the accepted view in America, that Russia's conduct was the result of distrust and that this distrust was justified by the past, but not by the present, conduct of the Western Powers.

There is very little enmity towards Russia, much less, I think (if we except the Catholics) than there is in America. There is at worst a considerable amount of irritation, such as we might feel towards an obstreperous invalid, and there is, I repeat, this strange uneasy curiosity.

We are, of course, long past the stage when we suffered from the grosser illusions about Russia. Most people here have a pretty shrewd idea about the Russian standard of life (that business with the wrist watches in Germany taught us quite a lot), most people heartily detest Russian official mendacity, which seems even to emerge in the reporting of international football matches, and consider the antics of the Communist Party to be something in the nature of a bad joke.

Yet despite these things a hideous and ghastly fact is beginning slowly to be brought home to us. We are beginning to discover that the Russians are happy. It is very upsetting, and only shows up the perverted natures of these Muscovites.

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They have no right to be happy; it is (in the circumstances) a gross violation of the principles of democracy and the Atlantic Charter that they should be happy. But the fact remains that they are.

In the same series of broadcasts from which I have already quoted, Mr. J. B. Priestley, a typical British individualist, if ever there was one, whom any infringement of freedom must affect like a bad smell, went on record as follows.

"What heartened and refreshed me was something I soon discovered—and discovered for myself, not expecting it—behind the outward drabness and occasional discomforts and inconveniences of Russian life. . . . This something was an atmosphere. On the negative side it revealed itself in an absence of bewilderment and frustration and cynicism; and this was particularly noticeable among the young people, so charged with vigor, enthusiasm and hope. On the positive side this atmosphere created a common feeling of simplicity, warmth and affection, an easy getting-togetherness that almost magically transformed the casual meeting of a dozen people into something like a family birthday party . . above all, there is everywhere a sense of community and common purpose, as there was in Britain for a while after Dunkirk, or in America just after Pearl Harbor.

There you have the thing that Russia has got and that we lack. Whether the present Labor Government is capable of making good the deficiency is a question which I cannot answer. It seems to me that it is still too much rooted in the materialistic values of laissez-faire. At the back of its mind there is still the shadow of the Economic Man whose chief preoccupation in life is the size of his income. It is something of a paradox that the Russians should always be reproached with a materialist conception of life and with their refusal to recognize that man is a spiritual being.

How far the term "materialist" is applicable to them in connection with their official philosophy of dialectical materialism I cannot say, because dialectical materialism is just a lot of gibberish to me, anyway. But by a kind of grotesque fluke it seems to me that the Russians have blundered on the secret that adventure, romance and outlets for creative activity are much more important to the average man than the size of his wage packet, and that our western socialists have not yet really tumbled to this fact; for the position at the moment is that the present Government may well succeed in giving the nation full employment, but so far shows no sign of intending to give it a job.

"Objectives . . . ends . . . vision . . . dream . . . spiritual content . . . dedication . . ."—There

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is a danger, it appears to at least one editor of THE COMMONWEAL, *that all these fine words sometimes add up in quick reading to "that fine, warm feeling in the pit of the stomach": a particularly tricky thing for Governments and Parties to worry about. Mr. Benvenisti's (and J. B. Priestley's) happy Russian, basking in an inner glow of spiritual, or at least intestinal, felicity does not present an adequately clear target for immortal longings. Just how hilariously happy most Russian people actually are is a question of grave doubt. Currently, for instance, Kravchenko* ("I Chose Freedom") *is giving some evidence more direct and decidedly at odds with Mr. Benvenisti's last paragraphs.*

Also, I think that the relationship between human happiness and "the principles of democracy and the Atlantic Charter" has a more than only humorous importance.

Hitler and his Nazis, it cannot be disputed, gave many Germans a delightfully cozy and communal sensation when they were ardently following his vision.

Anyone but a fool desires to have psychological release, a sense of dedication, spiritual content and meaning in his labors. A definition of the target, the content, the object of dedication is of absolutely essential importance.

When the Party, or the Government, have the function of defining and propagating the Ends, Purposes, Objectives of human life, that is very bad, in a totalitarian way. The excitement found in good political and economic programs properly comes from working at practical new means toward ends which the citizen chooses before picking his politics. The British Labor Party is wary, and the American reader might well also take simple precautions in reading and appreciating this excellent report on English conditions.— AN EDITOR.

The Screen

Real Folks in Reel Life

IT IS WHEN the movies begin monkeying around with the lives of the great or near-great that one wishes they'd stick to fiction and escapist comedies. With the musical biographies, one is inclined to relax a bit and not care too much if the scriptwriters juggle the facts somewhat in concocting romantic background plots for the songs surrounding Texas Guinan or Gershwin or Cohan or the Dolly Sisters. But when a movie biography attempts to be serious and then goes astray from the accepted versions, one can be less lenient.

In *"Devotion,"* supposedly the story of the Brontës, we are shown how Emily was head over heels in love with the Rev. Mr. Nicholls and suffered greatly because her father's curate had eyes only for Charlotte. This is an interesting idea—even if the standard biographers don't substantiate it. But the greatest departure from fact, and one that will no doubt most disturb those who have long mulled over the Brontë enigma, is the film's casting. Of course when biography is visualized, someone must play the rôles. The choice of Ida Lupino as moody Emily was good; and, except for the mysterious black-cloaked figure who dashes in and out of her imaginative life, this Emily could have been the author of "Wuthering Heights." Nancy Coleman serves very well as Anne, the least spectacular of the four unexplainable Brontës; and Arthur Kennedy makes the temperamental, besotted Bramwell quite real. But casting lovely Olivia de Havilland as plain, almost homely Charlotte changes the tone of the whole story—especially with handsome Paul Henreid playing opposite her as a virile lover instead of the dull, obstinate man Arthur Nicholls really was. Perhaps the Brontës and the parsonage rut in which they lived are too difficult for the films to capture. I suspect, however, that the French, with their subdued make-up and willingness to sacrifice glamor, could do it. At times this version catches the flavor of the moors and the strange family that unaccountably produced two geniuses. The film comes brightly to life in the Brussels scenes, thanks to Victor Francen and Odette Myrtil as the Hegers, and in some of the London episodes in which Thackeray (Sidney Greenstreet) and Charlotte become good friends. But on the whole Robert Buckner's production is too flossy, and Curtis Bernhardt's direction rather static. The Brontës must be approached with depth and understanding, and also perhaps with awe—qualities that are missing from this romantic movie called "Devotion."

The makers of *"So Goes My Love"* were more successful in their attempt at a biographical film—mainly because their aims were not so pretentious and because the Hiram Maxims are not so well known or complicated as the Brontës. This Jack Skirball-Bruce Manning production is really a period piece (Brooklyn during the 1860s and 70s) about an eccentric inventor. The script, based on Hiram Percy Maxim's "A Genius in the Family," has a pleasant, friendly humor and a nice understanding of relationships between people. So the resulting movie, while no profound study of the man who perfected the arc light, is an entertaining life-with-father sort of affair that glows warmly. Director Frank Ryan enjoys laughing at his subjects, and, except for one or two scenes, steers clear of getting too sentimental or whimsical about them. Fortunately his cast responds well to the intended satirical touches. Don Ameche as the smart but occasionally daft inventor, Myrna Loy as his wife who really came to the city to marry wealth but couldn't resist Hiram when he offered true love and a precarious existence, and Bobby Driscoll as Percy, their boyish and unfortunately named son, act like real people. The only distracting note in this amusing picture is Miss Loy's classy costumes which are too beautiful and too obviously designed with an eye on 1946. However, the movie's gentle humor more than compensates for this Hollywood touch. And Brooklynites will love the whole thing, for it treats their city as a place, not as a joke.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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The Labor Movement

Politics—AFL and CIO

AS THE '46 elections draw near and Congress, drunk with the wine of post-war reaction, slides further and further into the bottomless pit, the thoughts of the labor movement turn ever more fixedly to politics. Among other things, it is clear to every union man that if Congress is going to let the cost of living shoot up another 25 or 30 percent, then all the recent strikes and heartaches have improved the situation not at all.

In the face of this alarming prospect the AFL, as is its custom, has been playing a kind of waiting game, waiting for the CIO's PAC to show its hand, waiting for the elections to get closer—but mostly just waiting. It has thrown the heft of its national office behind OPA and other progressive legislation, which is all to the good, but it has done very little about stirring up its members to the supreme act of writing a letter to their Congressmen. And where there are no letters, history has shown, the people perish. For businessmen always write letters, and even hire their own mailmen to deliver them.

In the two most notable cases where the AFL has given evidence of going into action it has threatened to endorse Republican candidates for governor, Warren in California and Dewey in New York, both running for reelection. It is noteworthy that in both these states the Communists are very strong in the CIO and the CIO is pretty sure to be in the Democratic corner.

In California the probable candidate is Attorney General Kenny, himself a bit of a fellow-traveler. But in New York it will most likely be Senator Mead, and Mead, though acceptable, is by no means beloved by the CP's and has always been backed by the AFL in past elections. So there is good reason to think that the AFL is using the Dewey threat mainly for bargaining purposes.

It would seem rather foolish of the AFL to fritter away the good will it enjoys in the Truman Administration with a reckless campaign of endorsing Republican governors. The President hasn't yet forgotten that the AFL quietly supported him against Wallace at the '44 convention, nor has he forgotten, probably, that William Green was much more gentle with his fact-finding labor plan than was the bitter Philip Murray. As long as we must have this damnable business of CIO and AFL jockeying back and forth for superior position, then it would seem to be to the AFL's interest to jockey along with Truman and the Democrats. Neither Warren nor Dewey has amassed a record as a pro-labor giant.

For a while it looked as though the CIO would throw over both Truman and the Democrats, which would have guaranteed AFL support to both of them. There is no question but that the President has gone out of his way here and there to discourage the liberal wing of his party. The strong Snyder influence, the Pauley appointment, the replacing of Ickes with Krug, the failure to fight as hard as he might have on Capitol Hill, these things have sat none too well with the CIO nor with any American liberal, CIO, AFL or otherwise. Inspired to new dreams by labor's victory in England and the leftward swings all over Europe, progressives and laborites here have been flirting vigorously once again with the idea of a third party. Even the death of LaFollette's Progressive Party, last of a long line of suicides in the field, has not discouraged them.

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Among these dreamers the most active and articulate, if not the most romantic, have been the CP's. The smoke of war had hardly cleared away before they were howling for Harry Truman's scalp and denouncing his administration as "imperialist," "reactionary" and everything that is not nice. They have now definitely committed themselves to a third party, and Eugene Dennis, No. 2 CP in America, has said that organizing efforts should get under way "sometime early in 1947."

As might be expected, the other most active group working along these lines is the Socialist Party. According to the *Daily Worker*, the SP was the sponsor of a meeting in Chicago which developed into the Committee of American Progressives, whose initials are PAC backwards, as the *D.W.* likes to point out. Prominent in this group are Norman Thomas and A. Philip Randolph, and one of its members is Victor Reuther, brother of the famous Walter. James Patton of the Farmers Union and Mike Mann, right-wing leader of the Chicago CIO, were originally members, but pulled out. Naturally the *D.W.* couldn't even discuss this movement without spitting.

In the light of these facts, it should prove a blow to those who maintain that the CIO's PAC (Political Action Committee) is only a front for the reds to know that that organization has now come right out in the open and heaved a pail of cold water not only on the third-party movement, but on all attempts to drive the CIO out of the Truman coalition. In this pail-heaving the most forceful heaver has been Phil Murray, CIO president, who in a signed article for the New York *Times* magazine recently discussed the third party question at some length and concluded that "we have discarded at this time and for the foreseeable future all proposals to establish in the United States a third political party."

A prominent ally of Murray's has been none other than Sidney Hillman, PAC chairman, who has consistently refused to be stampeded into anti-Truman maneuvers and whose growing reluctance to take orders from the CP faction of New York's American Labor Party should make for interesting developments in that body. It is noteworthy that the only reference to Truman in a 3,000-word statement that came out of a recent PAC conference in Chicago was the following: "The coalition of poll-tax Democrats and reactionary Republicans thwarts the people's program. It blocks the Roosevelt legislative proposals which are being carried forward by President Truman in his message to the Congress."

Murray and Hillman seem to be looking at the political scene with far more realism than the CP's or SP's. They are particularly sensitive to the great big fact that any third party movement in "the foreseeable future" would have no other effect than to hand over Congress and the White House to an anti-labor Republican administration. Nor can they forget that the liberal wing of the Democratic Party is still far stronger than the reactionary wing, a fact eloquently supported by Henry Wallace in his recent speeches calling for more party discipline. Finally, they are aware of the natural political reaction that sets in after a war and they have not entirely forgotten that Roosevelt himself was not averse to unattractive compromises in the face of powerful opposition.

The political situation in the CIO, in short, is highly fluid at the present time and full of curious twists and turns. One of these was contained in the policy statement passed by the anti-Reuther majority of the United Auto Workers' executive board, the statement that was so bravely and unexpectedly criticized by Eleanor Roosevelt. While trying in subtle but obvious fashion to tar Reuther with the stigma of being pro-AFL, anti-Murray, anti-CIO and anti-PAC, the statement really repudiates Murray and PAC by denouncing the Truman Administration with irresponsible violence and calling again for the formation of a third party.

Whether Murray and Hillman will be able to restrain the enthusiasm of their SP and CP members remains to be seen. Certainly the next convention of the CIO should prove to be far more interesting than any held by that organization in a good many years.

JOHN C. CORT.

Books of the Week

And He Hid Himself. Ignazio Silone. Harper. $2.00.

ARTISTICALLY, and from the point of view of action, the pressure of a great tyranny greatly simplifies—if it also intensifies—the demands of heroism. A single direction is clearly marked and even the means are indicated. In this short play, which is a continuation of "The Seed Beneath the Snow," the little underground group inspired by Pietro Spina becomes more active; the year is 1935 just as Mussolini is launching his war against Ethiopia.

The Greek chorus against which Pietro's apostrophes to human freedom are set is various. It comprises peasants who find in the fascist yoke little that they have not already suffered for thousands of years; a collaborationist doctor who consistently smothers his scruples; a flamboyant and empty party orator; and, for a time, a worker who has betrayed his fellow-conspirators. It is a beautiful rhetorical device which Silone employs to the greatest artistic advantage. For humor, pathos, intensity of emotion, insight, his dialogues are superb. "And He Hid Himself" might be too talky to work out as a satisfactory stage production; it has such punch that it would certainly be worth the attempt. To read it straight through is an exciting experience.

Whereas "The Seed" was intensely Franciscan in feeling throughout, only to end in a horror that intimated Silone finally had no faith in anything, this play sustains and intensifies its Christian feeling as it goes along. The title, the preface and countless references by heroes and chorus develop the strongest parallel between the struggle of Pietro's little group and Christ's Passion and Death. Silone says, "The rediscovery of a Christian heritage in the revolution of our time remains the most important gain that has been made in these last years for the conscience of our generation." The pity is that now that his tyrants have gone the revolution has lost both drive and direction. And unless the political aspects of the quest for human brotherhood become more tangible, and do enlist popular energies and sacrifices, chaos or a new tyranny will be the end result of these terrible years of struggle. It would be more than interesting to know what sort of positive program Silone would advance for his beloved Italy right now. That might offer a clue to the job which should engage the victorious democracies—even here at home.

EDWARD SKILLIN, JR.

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The Bitter Box. Eleanor Clark. Doubleday. $2.50.

"THE BITTER BOX" is a very talented first novel, as you might expect it to be from Miss Clark's short stories. She has a gift of sophistication and gaiety. Landscapes, dialogue and characters are at her finger tips and she has little difficulty in moving them to her purposes.

The story is of Mr. Temple, a bank teller, timid and undemanding, who walks out of his cage one day to enjoy the city spring and gets caught up in the claws of the world. Quite suddenly he finds himself one of the oppressed. Then comes a strange nightmare of revolution, precarious love and theft, which drags him from security to poverty. At the end apparently, humanity reclaims him.

The method is abstract as the movies are abstract. There is a kind of elfin detachment about Mr. Temple. People and events change his words and his actions but have no physical connection with him. He and his city flit elusively as though they were on a screen.

Of course there is a perfectly good tradition behind these abstractions and the absence of naming things. Miss Clark has done some effective borrowing for her style. But where Kafka, say, uses the abstract theater of a dream with its illogicalities, his novels are in a sense very rigid morality plays. "The Bitter Box," with all its effectiveness, is still as detached as its method. You become too conscious of tricks and whimsicalities. You begin to think the author is being at once ironical and indulgent toward her characters, and leaving them to prove their own purposes. The book has the petals of a flower without its corolla, the rays of a light without its center.

The failure is a failure of identity, which goes deeper perhaps than the problem of whether Mr. Temple exists and whom he symbolizes. JOHN HAY.

Man on a Rock. Richard Hertz. Chapel Hill. $3.

OURS is a time which calls for re-education of ourselves, for explanations of the disasters of the spirit which have helped cause and may again cause disasters of the flesh, Richard Hertz argues brilliantly and convincingly in "an essay in idealism" whose wealth of rhetorical richness and range of cultural sources are at times overwhelming. We have struggled in vain "to stop the bottomless pit of the universe with a kind of fanatical self-sufficiency." We have lost the sense of the universal in a universalization of "the three great neuters—machines, intellect and money." We have confused mechanism with organism, chosen the conditioned to the Absolute, lost the particular in the total, fallen into an irrational worship of the rational. And from the "emotional sterility of the heartbreak house" of a "mammonized machine civilization" has come "resentment with its myths of blackmail and violence" to lead us into two world wars.

It must no longer be true, Mr. Hertz believes, that "the understanding of the world in an ultimate sense ceases to be desirable because it would not agree with the profitable operations of the machine age." We must recognize that the cultivation of consciousness, not of appetites is the most rewarding end of human activities, reaching this understanding through a "non-materialistic, psychological interpretation of the almost apocalyptical unrest which has seized the globe." For "the foe, like the kingdom of God, is within us." Seeing the sterility

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of the concept of man as a political animal, we must see the greater folly of a further discipline by subtraction which leaves man a productive animal whose integrating myth would be nothing more than an instinct for workmanship and organization and efficiency.

In essence Mr. Hertz's thesis is that "social practicality is much better served by practices that support the health of the soul, even though we have to transcend society for this purpose, than by repeating the practices which have disrupted the deeper unity of society." He believes "there is absolutely no reason why the century of the common man, which we have entered, should not achieve the goal of keeping alive in tolerable comfort an enormous number of the human species. This tremendous achievement is really not a triumph but the outcome of a renunciation—the acceptance of man's obligation so far as the motives of his history go. In order that security may be granted to the human species, history has to stop rocketing human meteors into the firmament." To this outcome Mr. Hertz is resigned though with bitterness and reservations.

"The only means to turn this defeat, which in a sense is inevitable, into victory, and to make a self-confinement of mankind in a world-wide productive plant psychologically bearable," he concludes, "is to accept 'lessening of man' not as a calculated premise for man's comfort, but as a *sacrifice* which is necessary for the unhindered operation of the cosmic firebird, Spirit, in the heart of Time." And: "let us pray that the victory of the common man does not mean the perpetuation of a merciless resentment, but rather that we will now proceed to make the environment yield to the overwhelming pressure of an infinite amount of time that longs to become quality in our consciousness." PERCY WINNER.

God Made the Country. Edward Townsend Booth. Knopf. $2.50.

EDWARD TOWNSEND BOOTH is a genuine ruralist, a combination farmer and author with more than thirty years' experience in both arts. The title of his book, "God Made the Country," leaves little room for argument, since the other half of that favorite agrarian slogan is "man made the city," and who wants to justify the ways of man above the work of God? Actually, Mr. Booth has little to say about God, but a great deal about the lives and times of some three dozen of the greatest authors of Western civilization "from Hesiod to Tolstoy." He binds them together in a series of essays because all of them did their best writing in rural retreats and share a common enthusiasm for rural living.

The study has importance beyond the inner circle of rural life champions, since farming activities influenced the writings of these authors—obviously so with Virgil and Thoreau but all of them show the mark. Mr. Booth is no fly-by-night scholar. He quotes widely and lets his authors tell what they did and why they did it, and his reading list includes a number of little known works of the well known men. The "bug" is the same for all of them: "If a man own land, the land owns him," as Emerson wrote; but they came to the land for varying reasons. Some were seeking peace, solitude, independence. Others, like Horace, reveled in the rich living and good food. The Romantics sought communion with Nature, and almost all wanted freedom from the vulgarity and commercialism of the city. Many were gentlemen farmers; they loved rural life but not the hard work of farming and servants were as necessary as land and cattle. Yet none of them were of the silly type of ruralist like Marie Antoinette and her "peasants" or some of the modern station wagon set for whom rural living is a quaint and simply adorable fad.

Not all of Mr. Booth's gallery persevered. Tolstoy's wife finally lured him away from the land to Moscow, where he promptly "descended into suicidal depression." Melville's farm so occupied his time that he had to flee to an urban garret to finish "Moby Dick." But all of them would agree with Xenophon whose satisfaction from his farm in ancient Greece challenged all comers: "What life is better liked by servants, or pleasanter for a wife; more delightful for children, more agreeable to friends? To me it seems unlikely that any man can have a better lot than this or could find a happier or more useful way of making a living."

Well—the mocking penthouse scholar must have his day—what does it prove? If Voltaire, who spent forty years in rural seclusion, insists: "I detest cities . . . I have to have gardens . . . I have found the greatest possible independence," how about Wm. Shakespeare's leaving peasant Avon for London? If Worhsworth was an enthusiastic farmer, did Dante find it necessary to make compost heaps? So be it. So be it. All that Mr. Booth is trying to show is that too often to be coincidental there has been a "happy mixed marriage" between the root and flower of civilization, the farmer and the writer, "a marriage wonderfully productive in much prose and poetry that remains . . . ever-green through the ages." Naturally, "God Made the Country" will delight the agrarian. He may regret the curious omission of Robert Burns when space was found for Carlyle. He may wonder about the jump from Sidonius in the fifth century to Madame De Sévigné in the seventeenth as though there were no William Langland nor other authors who drew strength from the soil during those twelve hundred years. But he will be satisfied. The teacher and lover of literature need this volume to understand better a good number of classical writers. EMERSON HYNES.

The Discovery of Canada. Lawrence J. Burpee. Macmillan. $3.00.

EXCEPT for Parkman and the Jesuit Relations, which are themselves considered pretty "special," early Canadian history is not well known, and for several centuries it has not been published in a style to capture wide public interest.

Intrinsically, the adventure of Canada's discovery and exploration appears to have all the requirements of high romantic attraction. The land itself is enormous, after Russia the biggest country in the world. Its terrain and climate make it the grandest challenge possible to explorers and give it the attraction of the extreme exotic. Its Indians and Esquimaux were most obscure people indeed when Europeans first encountered them. But still, as traditionally told (and that mostly in schools), the tale never really came alive.

Lawrence J. Burpee for several active decades has been one of the most eminent leaders in the study of Canadian history and geography, and he remembered that in his own school days what proved to be his great interests had seemed distinctly uninteresting. This present volume is written to rehabilitate first Canadian history and present the story again for general knowledge and spontaneous attraction.

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The method is to call upon the explorers and adventurers themselves, giving, with clarfying organization and editing and selection of material, their personal accounts of fabulous sea voyages, canoe trips and long trail expeditions. Most of these accounts are not, it is true, written with much literary or dramatic flair, but the subject matter itself has interest enough of the solidest kind.

The immense effort of searching and mapping Canada and the few natives who lived there, from Lief Ericson to Operations Muskox and Frostbite, was almost altogether an oblique or indirect effort. The discovery and exploration of the Dominion must be, in fact, the giant by-product of western history. The first objective of nearly all the men who did the work and financed the expeditions was always to find the Northwest Passage (whether Robert McClure finally took the British Admiralty's £20,000 prize for its discovery after his passage from Bering Strait to Baffin Bay in the years 1850-1853, Mr. Burpee doesn't say), or else it was simply to find more profitable pelts for prosaic trade.

The bulky land mass of Canada was traversed as early as it was because of its surprisingly convenient configuration: deeply indented by Hudson Bay and the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence, and tied together by the great rivers which nearly interlock around Lake Winnipeg. From Hudson Bay and the St. Lawrence Frenchmen, Englishmen, Canadians and the others found their way west to the Columbia and Fraser, northwest to the Yukon and Mackenzie, and to all the infrequent Indian tribes to be met with along the way. It was a tremendously hard job done, and one it is good to read about. Those who accomplished the work wrote about it almost invariably with the slightest possible sense of their own heroism. Mr. Burpee is so confident of the heroic size and character of their exploits that he, as guide to their travels, can likewise dispense with theatrics and can present the story straight. The reader can be glad indeed to have the material so well and straightforwardly given to him.

PHILIP BURNHAM.

Peace Atlas of Europe. Samuel Van Valkenburg. Duell. $2.00.

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Next Week

THE BARREN TREE, by George N. Shuster: "The world will not be converted by the shudder which now runs up and down its spine. That will in the end drive men only to sacrifice all else, even freedom, to self-preservation. I think we shall put shackles on ourselves so that our fingers may be kept from the atomic bomb. Conversion, saving, will come only when, having sensed that his own miracles have only the ruthless automatism of nature in them, man will pray for the miracle of Love which he has not the power to perform. . . ."

THREE MEN OF ARGENTINA, by Victoria Ocampo, deals with three modern literary figures in her native land. The first of these is Ricardo Guiraldes, author of the national classic, "Don Segundo Sombra," who died in 1927. The other two, Jorge Luis Borges and Eduardo Mallea, directors of the influential review, *Sur*, are one in spirit with Guiraldes in that all three chose the intellectual and spiritual poverty of their native land in preference to the cultural luxury they would have enjoyed in Paris. A revealing note on the intellectual climate of Buenos Aires.

LIGHTS OUT, by Ted Le Berthon, has to do with a well-publicized night softball game which encountered obstacles. Both St. Luke's school of Thibodaux, Louisiana, and the Josephite priests who had just completed their annual Retreat were on hand and were willing, but the town authorities objected. St. Luke's is a Negro school. A memorable incident told in vivid style by an experienced newspaper man from the Pacific coast.

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